Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Original) An apparatus for maintaining compatibility between nodes within a distributed systems management environment, comprising:

a primary node, said primary node including a primary storage area, said primary storage area including at least two primary storage sections; and

a plurality of secondary nodes, each secondary node of said plurality of secondary nodes configured with a plurality of configuration settings having a first format, and each secondary node of said plurality of secondary nodes including a secondary storage area, wherein said primary node is operable to:

read said plurality of configuration settings having said first format from a first primary storage section of said at least two primary storage sections;

transform said plurality of configuration settings having said first format to a plurality of configuration settings having a second format;

write said plurality of configuration settings having said second format to a second primary storage section of said at least two primary storage sections; and

convey said plurality of configuration settings having said second format from said second primary storage section to each said secondary storage area of said plurality of secondary nodes; and wherein each said secondary node of said plurality of secondary nodes is operable to:

receive said plurality of configuration settings having said second format; and

reconfigure in accordance with said plurality of configuration settings having said second format.

2. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein said primary node comprises a master node, and said plurality of secondary nodes comprises a plurality of slave nodes.

3. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein said distributed systems management environment comprises a WebSphere environment.

4. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein said primary storage area comprises a master repository, and said secondary storage area comprises a node repository.

5. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein said convey operation comprises a synch out operation.

6. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein said first format comprises a WebSphere version 5.x format, and said second format comprises a WebSphere 6.x format.

7. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein said plurality of configuration settings having said first format comprises at least one 5.x XSL schema document, and said plurality of configuration settings having said second format comprises at least one 6.x XSL schema document.

8. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein said primary node and said plurality of secondary nodes comprise a plurality of data processing units.

9. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein said primary node and said plurality of secondary nodes comprise a plurality of servers.

10. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein said primary node and said plurality of secondary nodes comprise a cell.

11. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein said distributed systems management environment comprises a WebSphere Application Server.

12. (Original) A method for maintaining compatibility between a primary node and a plurality of secondary nodes within a distributed systems management environment, comprising the steps of:

reading a plurality of configuration settings having a first format from a first storage area of said primary node;

transforming said plurality of configuration settings having said first format to a plurality of configuration settings having a second format;

writing said plurality of configuration settings having said second format to a second storage area of said primary node;

conveying said plurality of configuration settings having said second format from said second storage area to each secondary node of said plurality of secondary nodes;

at least one of said each secondary node receiving said plurality of configuration settings having said second format; and

said at least one of said each secondary node reconfiguring in accordance with said plurality of configuration settings having said second format.

13. (Original) The method of Claim 12, wherein said primary node comprises a master node, and said plurality of secondary nodes comprises a plurality of slave nodes.

14. (Original) The method of Claim 12, wherein said distributed systems management environment comprises a WebSphere environment.

15. (Original) The method of Claim 12, wherein said first and second storage areas comprise a master repository.

16. (Original) The method of Claim 12, wherein the conveying step comprises a synching out operation.

17. (Original) The method of Claim 12, wherein said first format comprises a WebSphere version 5.x format, and said second format comprises a WebSphere 6.x format.

18. (Original) The method of Claim 12, wherein said plurality of configuration settings having said first format comprises at least one 5.x XSL schema document, and said plurality of configuration settings having said second format comprises at least one 6.x XSL schema document.

19. (Original) The method of Claim 12, wherein said primary node and said plurality of secondary nodes comprise a plurality of servers.

20. (Original) A computer program product in a computer readable medium for maintaining compatibility between a primary node and a plurality of secondary nodes within a distributed systems management environment, the computer program product comprising:

first instructions for reading a plurality of configuration settings having a first format from a first storage area of said primary node;

second instructions for transforming said plurality of configuration settings having said first format to a plurality of configuration settings having a second format;

third instructions for writing said plurality of configuration settings having said second format to a second storage area of said primary node;

fourth instructions for conveying said plurality of configuration settings having said second format from said second storage area to each secondary node of said plurality of secondary nodes;

fifth instructions for receiving said plurality of configuration settings having said second format; and

sixth instructions for reconfiguring in accordance with said plurality of configuration settings having said second format.